

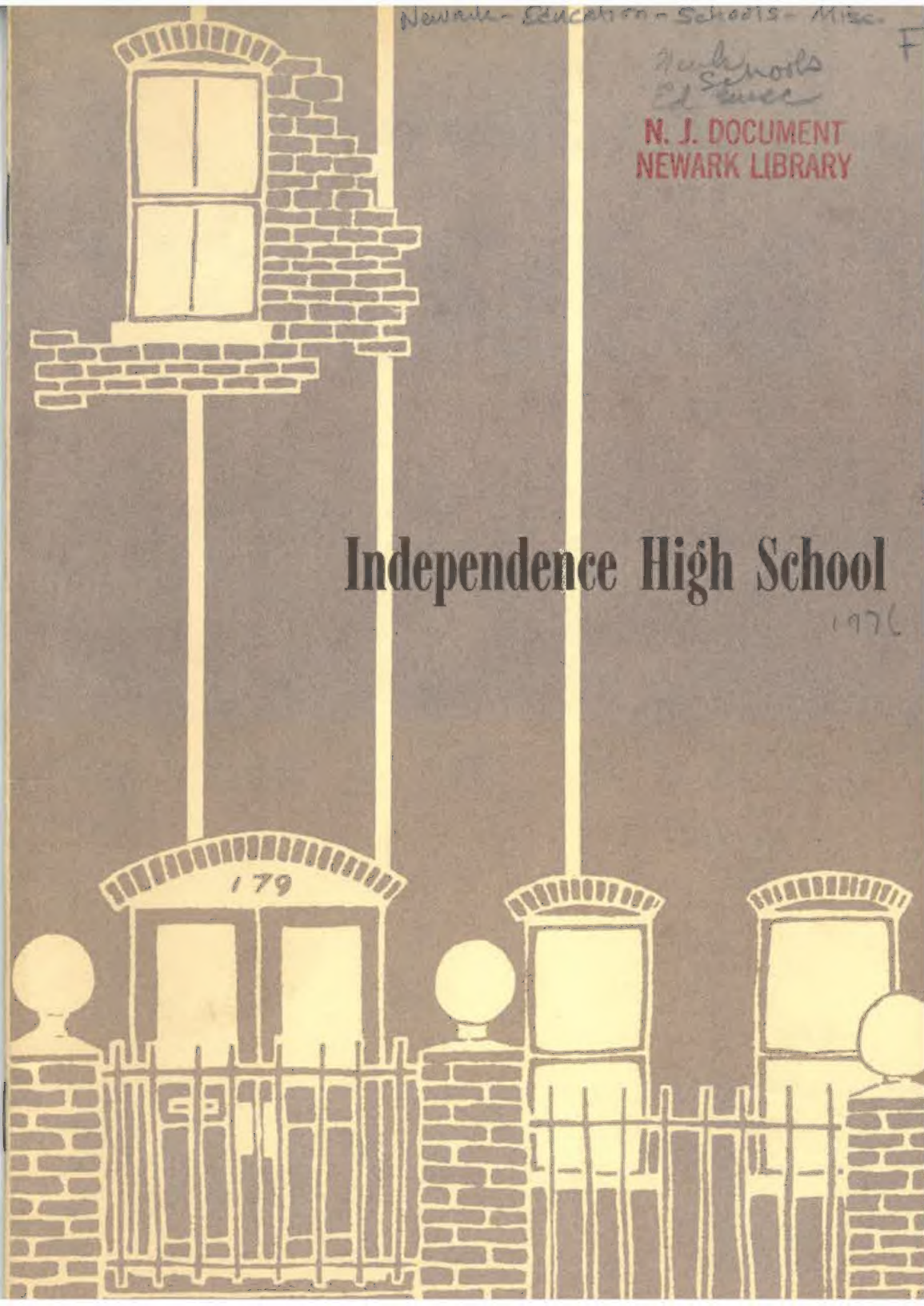
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# Independence High School

1976

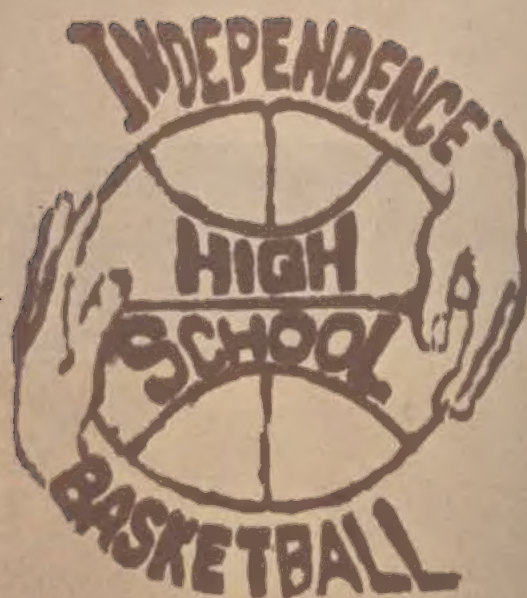




179 Van Buren Street  
Newark, N. J. 07105

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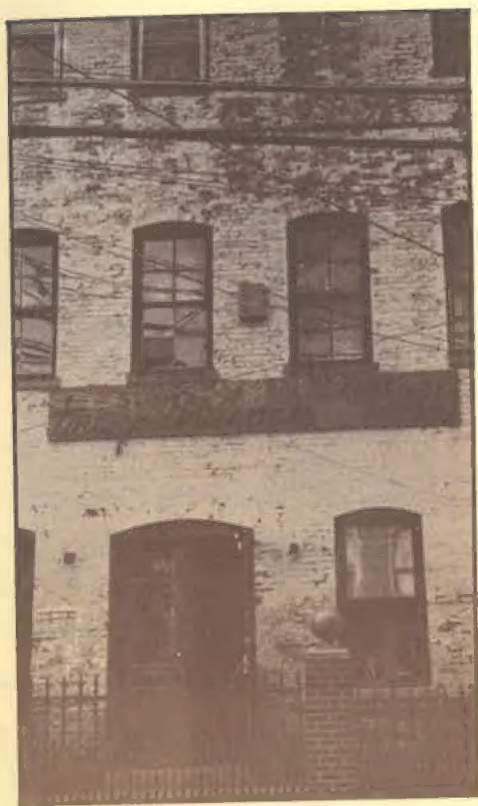






Independence High School is a multi-racial alternative school in the Ironbound section of Newark. In September, 1976 there will be 80 students enrolled in the school, with a staff of 20 full and part-time

people. In an environment where learning, growth and self discovery are highly valued, students receive intensive counseling and guidance in order that they may fully explore the options of skilled jobs and further education when they graduate.







The school opened in September, 1971, growing out of the ideas and plans of a group of high school drop-outs, with the help of community VISTA volunteers. An old toy factory was purchased and transformed, by staff and students, into a working high school facility. Funding came from private foundations and HEW. Later that same year the school was validated by the New Jersey State Department of Education as a state approved high school. This state approval allows Independence to grant a valid New Jersey high school diploma. A High Impact Grant (Federal money aimed at assisting potentially delinquent youth) was awarded to the school in 1973. Funding now comes from a variety of sources, including the State Law Enforcement Protection Agency, the New Jersey Department of Institutions and Agencies, the Schumann Foundation, and the Victoria Foundation. Independence also utilizes VISTA volunteers and some staff employed under the Comprehensive Employment Training Act (CETA).



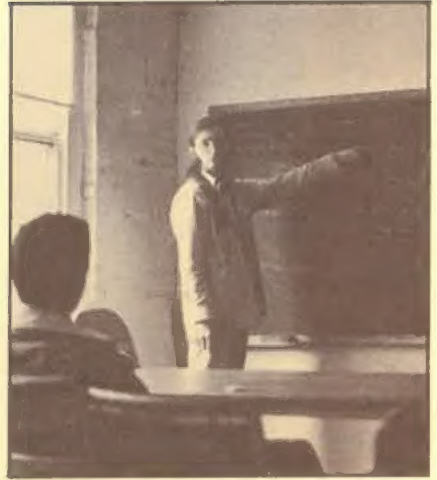
## ADMISSIONS

Independence High School draws its student body from all areas of Newark. Students must be from Newark and must be at least 14 years old. All prospective students are placed on the waiting list and interviewed by a member of the Admissions Committee, which is composed of four staff members. While Independence cannot admit students who are classified as emotionally disturbed or with learning disabilities, there are no hard and fast academic requirements for admission to the school. Independence High's curriculum is designed to meet the needs of students at all skills levels. The majority of the student body are high school drop outs. The admissions interviewer thus is especially interested in the motivation of the prospective student — does the student really want to come and why — because it is the student in the end, not his or her parents, or social worker, or guidance counselor, who must make the commitment to getting the education offered by Independence High School.



## ACADEMIC PROGRAM

Our academic program includes a wide range of basic skills and what we refer to as "Special Skills". Basic Skills at Independence High means English, Math, and Social Studies. Each newly enrolled student is tested upon entry to determine skill levels in Reading, Writing, and Math. After skill levels are determined through testing,



each student is assigned to an English and Math class which corresponds to that student's abilities, and is also scheduled for any additional remedial or tutorial work necessary. Student and advisor work out a Social Studies program which meets the school's requirements and takes into account the student's previous Social Studies experience. Students are required to take at least one English, Math, and Social Studies course each cycle.



In Special Skills, programs include drawing, carpentry, video tape, photography, silk screening, and music. Often Special Skills classes help students develop interests which might become career choices; students are encouraged to expand their skills and practice them, by setting up job placements for the work program in the area of interest. Physical Education courses include men's and women's basketball, yoga, and volleyball.







There are two academic cycles scheduled per year; each cycle is approximately twelve weeks long. The last week of each academic cycle is Evaluation Week, during which each student and teacher write both class and individual evaluations. The individual evaluations are designed to explain the student's progress in specific skills, areas of strength and weakness, and the projected focus for the next academic period. Students meet with their counselors to discuss these evaluations, and shape a tentative schedule for the next cycle.





## WORK PROGRAM

The Work Program occurs in between the two academic cycles: for four weeks in January, and during the summer months for eight weeks. Students are placed in a variety of occupational situations, selected according to a realistic conception of career possibilities. The school provides academic credit as well as an hourly salary for satisfactory work. In light of the decreasing job market, the work program is an invaluable opportunity for students to gain on-the-job experience in a variety of work places.



## COUNSELING

Counseling is a major part of the school's program. Two thirds of the full time teaching staff are also counselors, one of whom is assigned to each student. Counselors and students meet together at least once a week, or more often if necessary, reviewing academic progress, working out particular problems and difficulties, discussing and planning the Work Program Placement, and exploring the







student's feelings about their school experience. There are periodic all-school meetings called to confront, and make decisions as a group, about crucial school issues. Both group and individual therapy are offered to students on a voluntary basis. Social Services include Family Counseling, Career Counseling, Medical and Dental Care, legal help, and bus tickets. In September, 1976, a daily hot lunch program will be introduced, sponsored through the National School Lunch Program.





## GRADUATION

All students who are to graduate in June begin the graduation counseling process the previous September, so that ample time will be allowed for them to discuss and make career choices. Students considering college work with the college counselor on tutoring and preparation for the SAT's, visits and interviews on college campuses, filling of applications and financial aid forms, and, finally, the selection of a college which fits the student's needs. Career counseling may be done individually or in groups. A vocational counselor is available to assist in the placement of students in training programs, or jobs. Skills necessary for job-seeking are taught and reinforced.



